

PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT
New National Stage Entry Appln. of PCT/FR2004/002839

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Currently Amended) A molding device for producing containers by blow molding or stretch blow molding from preforms made of a heated thermoplastic, said device comprising at least one mold (1) ~~consisting of~~ comprising at least two half-molds [(1a, 1b)], mutually displaceable between an open position in which they are separated from one another and a closed position in which they are tightly pressed against one another by respective cooperating bearing faces [(2a, 2b)], defining a joint plane [(3)], the two half-molds [(1a, 1b)] having at least two respective corresponding edges [(15a, 15b)] of their respective bearing faces [(2a, 2b)] which are radially designed in the form of two mutually overlapping edges with respective opposing mating faces [(16a, 16b)] in the closed position of the mold, locking means [(14)] being functionally associated with said overlapping edges, ~~characterized in that~~ wherein said locking means (14) are designed in the following manner:

- one of said overlapping edges [(15a)] located on the inside has a mating face (internal mating face) [(16a)] which terminates in a hook [(17a)] and which has a recess [(18a)] adjacent to the hook;
- the other of said overlapping edges [(15b)] located on the outside has a mating face (external mating face) [(16b)] which terminates in a hook [(17b)] and which has a recess [(18b)] adjacent to the hook;

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- said respective hooks [(17a, 17b)] and recesses [(18a, 18b)] of said internal [(15a)] and external [(15b)] overlapping edges extend substantially over the entire height of the mold;
- a gib [(19)] extending substantially over the entire height of the mold is mounted rotatably about a pin [(20)] corresponding to one of its edges in one of said recesses and in contact with the respective hook; and
- drive means are functionally associated with said gib [(19)] for pivoting about its pin [(20)] between two extreme positions,
whereby the gib [(19)] may occupy two functional positions, namely:
 - a position inserted into its mounting recess in which the gib [(19)] does not engage the opposing recess of the other overlapping edge and allows a mutual relative displacement of the two half-molds (opening and closing of the mold); and
 - a projecting position in which the gib [(19)] is pivoted toward the outside of its mounting recess and - the two half-molds [(1a, 1b)] being in the closed position - engages in the opposing recess of the other overlapping edge such that, when the two half-molds [(1a, 1b)] are subjected to forces separating them from one another (pre-blow molding, blow molding), said gib [(19)] is engaged with the two respective hooks [(17a, 17b)] of the two overlapping edges [(15a, 15b)] and mechanically holds the two half-molds [(1a, 1b)].

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2. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 1, in which the mold [[(1)]] is of the jackknife type with the two half-molds [[(1a, 1b)]] mutually articulated in rotation on a shaft (8) substantially parallel to one side of the joint plane [[(3)]], characterized in that and wherein said locking means [[(14)]] are provided on the side of the mold opposing said shaft [[(8)]] of the two half-molds.

3. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 1-~~or 2~~, in which each half-mold [[(1a, 1b)]] comprises a mold carrier [[(5a, 5b)]] to which is fixed internally a shell [[(6a, 6b)]] provided with a mold half-impression [[(4a, 4b)]], the joint plane [[(6)]] being defined by the two shells [[(6a, 6b)]] pressed against one another in the closed position of the mold, characterized in that and wherein the locking means [[(14)]] are supported by the two mold carriers [[(5a, 5b)]].

4. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 3~~, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the gib is supported by said internal overlapping edge.

5. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4~~, characterized in that claim 1, wherein the respective hooks [[(17a, 17b)]] of said two overlapping edges [[(15a, 15b)]] and the gib [[(19)]] extend continuously, substantially over the entire height of the mold.

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6. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that claim 1, wherein~~ the gib [[(19)]] and at least the hook of the opposing overlapping edge extend discontinuously, substantially over the entire height of the mold.

7. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 6, characterized in that claim 1, wherein~~ the gib [[(19)]] is supported in rotation, on or by its pin, with radial play.

8. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in ~~any one of claims 1 to 7, claim 1,~~ this device being of the carousel type and mobile in rotation, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the drive means functionally associated with the gib [[(19)]] consist of at least one idler roller [[(24)]] supported, by means of a return mechanism, by one end of a rotating shaft of the gib, said roller being capable of cooperating with a fixed guide cam arranged laterally on the rotating carousel.

9. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 8, ~~characterized in that wherein~~ the drive means of the gib [[(19)]] consist of a return spring [[(25)]] capable of returning the gib [[(19)]] into said inserted position thereof.

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10. (Currently Amended) The molding device as claimed in claim 8, characterized in that wherein the drive means of the gib [[(19)]] consist of a return spring [[(25)]] capable of returning the gib [[(19)]] into said projecting position thereof.